

partment of Public Works are contained in several large boxes. Evidently this investigation requires the production of a large number of papers, and it would not be surprising if some of them, on the first inspection, should be found to be missing. The hon. gentleman mentioned the other day, at the sitting of the Committee, that he had found out that some papers were missing. Surely there could not have been any intention of deceiving the hon. gentleman, or preventing his going on with his investigation. He found complete lists of those papers published in the blue-books.

Mr. TARTE. It was a very small blue-book.

Mr. GIROUARD. If those papers were mentioned in the blue-books, there could not have been any intention of hiding them.

Mr. TARTE. They were not produced.

Mr. GIROUARD. But there could not have been any intention of deceiving him or the public. I wish to make another statement as to the papers which were not found in the two boxes, but which were mentioned in the blue-books. They were produced on the very day that it was noticed they were missing, and I notified the hon. gentleman that he could have access to them. With regard to the correspondence of Mr. Trutch, I was informed yesterday that the hon. gentleman had made a demand on the clerk of the Committee for those papers. I looked at the order of the Committee, and I found that he was entitled to have them produced; I therefore, immediately, gave instructions to the clerk to demand the production of the papers from the Public Works Department. I do not know yet what answer he has received from the department. I am sure the hon. gentleman has no reason to complain of delay. He has received from the Committee and the Government all the assistance he could get.

Mr. IVES. I wish to say, on behalf of the private members of the House, that we do not complain that the Committee on Privileges and Elections should sit every day; but we have been in session now nearly two months, and we have had only two meetings of the Railway Committee, and none of the Committee on Banking and Commerce, or the Committee on Private Bills. The whole time has been monopolized by this investigation. Now, it seems to me that arrangements should be made by the Government for this Committee to sit simultaneously with the sittings of the other Committees, and for its vacating the Railway Committee room. We had a short meeting of the Railway Committee this morning with over forty orders on the paper. Among them was one Bill the promoters of which asked that we should not only pass it, but that we should reduce from two months to two weeks the notice required to be given to the Governor General in Council for the sanction of a lease, the reason given being that the whole season would be lost for the work of construction if the time were not reduced. I have no doubt that other very large interests are being injured and imperilled in consequence of the monopoly of our time by this Committee, to the exclusion of all the ordinary legitimate business of the country. Now, while we sympathize with the Government in their anxiety not to delay this investigation, I think it is not too much to ask them, because they have the control of the matter, to make

provision that the ordinary business of the country may go on in the meantime. Of course, we do not expect to satisfy certain gentlemen who seem bound to find fault anyway—to find fault with the non-production of papers which were only asked for yesterday, and all that sort of thing; but we do think that the Government—and I am speaking not only for my own friends, but for hon. members on the other side who have Bills before the different committees—should make arrangements so that the other committees may meet simultaneously, and that they should not ask us to wait till the end of the Session for private Bill legislation which is urgently needed.

Mr. LAURIER. I am sure it is not the intention of any hon. member to cast suspicion or blame upon anyone in connection with this matter. For my own part, I will gladly add my testimony to that of the hon. member for Montmorency (Mr. Tarte), that the hon. Minister of Justice is entitled to credit for the manner in which he has discharged his duty to the House in this investigation. At the same time, the anxiety of the hon. member for Montmorency is natural, because he has assumed a task which is painful to him, and the consequences of which may be very serious to him if he does not establish the charges which he has made; and it seems to me that a remark made by the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Girouard) fully justifies the complaint of my hon. friend. My hon. friend has complained that certain papers which were ordered to be produced by the Department of Public Works were not produced.

Mr. TARTE. A month ago.

Mr. LAURIER. Ordered to be produced a month ago. The hon. Minister of Public Works says that he gave orders for the production of those papers. I unhesitatingly accept his statement; but it appears from what the hon. member for Jacques Cartier has said that up to yesterday certain papers which were ordered a month ago—that is, the correspondence of Mr. Trutch, the inspector of public works in British Columbia—were not yet produced. Therefore, while I will not say that there was a failure of duty anywhere, for one reason or another the papers were not produced, and the remark of my hon. friend that the Order of the House has not been complied with is fully borne out. It is easy to understand that some warmth of blood may be exhibited; but when we come to sift the matter, let us admit that no one has intended to do wrong, though there has been a hitch somewhere, and it is quite natural that the matter should be brought to the notice of the House.

Mr. GIROUARD. The Order of the House was for papers, correspondence, and so forth, without specifying any particular papers. As the papers produced filled two trunks, it was quite possible that some of the desired documents might be missing; but the moment any paper was specified, an immediate order was given for its production.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. I think this matter is irregularly before the House, not only because we are having a debate on the Orders of the Day being called, but also in this sense—and it may not be amiss that I should make the suggestion now for future guidance—that we are really prosecuting the business of the Committee in the